

CASE STUDY

Hartmann-Cox Chartered Accountants has forged a new path – moving from a traditional on-premise technology environment to a full embrace today of the cloud and all of the benefits this offers its staff and clients.



Company Profile

Name: Hartmann-Cox
Chartered Accountants

Region: Australia

Products: Accounting, Business Advice and Management, Taxation and GST, Investment Advice and Structuring and Superannuation

Employees: 15

www.hartmanncox.com.au



Challenges

- Develop a cloud-first infrastructure approach capable of enhanced practice management, business intelligence and client communications outcomes
- Identify high value advisory revenue opportunities and build new revenue streams



Solution

- ✓ CCH iFirm Practice Manager
- ✓ CCH iKnow
- ✓ CCH Tax
- ✓ CCH iQ Client Match

Established over 30 years ago, Hartmann-Cox has completed the first two rounds of a multi-phase business technology transformation program. These phases signalled the end of desktop practice management software for the firm as the strategic direction they wanted to take would instead focus on cloud-enabled solutions. Additionally, Hartmann-Cox wanted to build a roadmap to incorporating smarter business solutions into its offering and they needed the flexibility and scalability only the cloud would deliver.

For the firm this new approach to cloud-based technology has seen practice management, tax and business intelligence capabilities launch and integrate with the firm's plans to retire its servers and move its entire communications platform to Office 365 in 2020.

Hartmann-Cox is now well positioned to transition to a cloud-first environment in the coming 12 months. Fielding a team of 15 accounting professionals, Hartmann-Cox is building the infrastructure it needs to operate as a future proof intelligent practice.

Partner and Chartered Accountant, Troy Johnson acknowledges the importance of the firm's cloud-first policy and its role in influencing its current practice management and business intelligent solutions.

"Being in the cloud is a huge influencing factor whenever we assess a solution that is designed to have a positive impact for the firm. Not only have we calculated a minimum reduction of 50 percent of our technology overheads by moving to the cloud and retiring hardware we have had to own and manage, the efficiency and productivity benefits we believe will continue to deliver positive results for us every year moving forward."

TROY JOHNSON
Partner, Hartmann-Cox Chartered Accountants

CCH iFirm is the next generation cloud-based suite of software to allow accountants to run more efficient and profitable firms. The CCH iFirm suite includes Practice Manager, Tax, Client Accounting, Web Manager and Document Manager. CCH iKnow is an accounting specialist research platform which hosts expert content, real world examples and hundreds of practice tools.

CCH iQ Client Match is multi-award-winning predictive intelligence that takes the pressure and leg work out of staying up-to-date with tax developments and changes.



TROY JOHNSON

Partner, Hartmann-Cox Chartered Accountants

CASE STUDY: HARTMANN-COX

CCH iFirm lifts the benchmark for practice management and beyond

Already familiar with desktop practice management software with a competitive solution in operation over a number of years, Hartmann-Cox wanted to source a cloud-based practice management solution that could deliver flexible and transparent workflow. Following an open market review, it selected CCH iFirm based on what it saw as a compelling shortlist of benefits - highly flexible intuitive workflow, job tracking and efficient management tools.

Today CCH iFirm is implemented practice-wide and it has become the corner stone solution for everything from job creation and setting up new clients all the way through to work and partner reviews and client communications. Every piece of workflow the firm generates is processed by CCH iFirm.

CCH iFirm offers a customisable dashboard which is well utilized with each member of the team – from partners to associates – tailoring the dashboard to suit their daily needs.

The move to the cloud for its practice management software also influenced the firm's attitude to ancillary software and services from Wolters Kluwer.

"We always really liked the concept of CCH iQ Client Match and its ability to revolutionise the approach to tax-related events. And so, we planned our strategy to build the 'engine' CCH iQ would need to run at peak performance levels. That's what led us first to CCH Cloud Tax – Australia's first solution to take tax into the cloud for clients and the ATO," said Johnson.

"This was the second phase of our move to the cloud. CCH Cloud Tax is really the last piece of the puzzle we needed to streamline how we access the information we hold in our client database. CCH Cloud Tax is more than form filling, it's capturing the information we need to better service our client's tax and business advisory requirements."

Hartmann-Cox implemented CCH Cloud Tax and ensured it was running successfully for a full tax year prior to rolling out the next phase of transforming how it keeps its clients up to date with tax changes and rulings that may impact them personally or professionally.

CCH iQ Client Match paves the way for the intelligent practice

The implementation of CCH iQ for Hartmann-Cox has opened up a new 'natural business advisory'. Previously the firm had been sourcing information from multiple sources, including CCH iKnow but was relying on manually linking information to each accountant's recollection of a client file. CCH iQ Client Match is the industry's first intelligent solution to review relevant content and sources to detect tax events as they happen including events which may change the tax landscape, or 'trigger' change. When deployed with deliver new advisory and revenue growth opportunities. Events can include anything from legislative changes to ATO rulings all the way through to macro-economic events.

"For us CCH iQ Client Match is a game changer. We can see around a 90% efficiency improvement in matching trigger events to our client database. Having access to high quality event triggers and being able to automatically match that data with the relevant client is giving us an invaluable tool for ad-hoc advice. This is in fact what clients want – a rolling approach to client servicing and account management. Our past experience with implementing structured advisory service programs uncovered one thing – clients are skeptical of contrived advisory touch points – they want to know you are there with them when it counts. CCH iQ adds true value to our business and our clients."

"Being live and in the cloud with CCH iQ Client Match means we can explain how trigger events may impact their business and how it will affect them. It's a quick way to launch a valuable strategy discussion. This is what clients want to pay for. I think CCH iQ Client Match is imperative for any firm attempting to deliver proper business advisory services," outlined Johnson.

With its preparation for the firm's IT infrastructure to move to the cloud and implement cloud software solutions underway, the firm is planning to continue to a full cloud migration in the coming 12 months. This is part of its recognition that the automation the cloud delivers will continue and further ramp up as software automation takes on more of the 'heavy lifting' for compliance.

"There is less manual work to do with compliance offerings and this has increased our efficiency and means we have more time and energy to focus on business advisory. Clients are increasingly looking to us for financial advice and we see our role as their most trusted adviser only becoming more important."